

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-6 (Cancelled)

7. (New) A method of cutting sheet members, wherein at the time of stacking a plurality of sheet members having air impermeability while fixing the sheet members by vacuum suction, and cutting the sheet members along a predetermined cutting line toward parts, the cutting is performed by locally heating a seam allowance of the part or a region outside the seam allowance, near the cutting line by frictional heat between the sheet members and a knife or a punch of a cutting head such that the sheet members are welded together vertically to fix upper and lower sheet members, or the cutting is performed such that a plurality of uncut portions are formed along the cutting line, and then, the uncut portions are cut.

8. (New) A method of cutting sheet members according to claim 7, wherein the local heating is performed along the cutting line or a region slightly outside the cutting line at several positions for each part.

9. (New) A method of cutting sheet members according to claim 7, wherein the local heating is performed in the seam allowance inside the cutting line at several positions for each part.